



Patrick Byorth, Staff Attorney
Montana Water Project

Mark Lere
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Habitat Protection Bureau
PO Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701

May 9, 2012

RE: Miner Creek Yellowstone Cutthroat Conservation Project

Dear Mark,

Hope all is well with you and the Future Fisheries Improvement Program. I just wanted to voice Trout Unlimited's support for Carol Endicott's Miner Creek project. As you know, TU's Montana Water Project is focused on conservation and restoration of habitat and water quality and quantity for coldwater fish. We are glad to support this project, which entails replacing an undersized culvert, controlling a livestock crossing and improving riparian condition.

In my tenure with FWP and with TU, I have personally observed the significant results of relatively small, simple projects that eliminate sediment sources in small, headwater tributaries inhabited by cutthroat trout. Even short reaches where livestock congregate can dump tons of fine sediments into a stream and limit habitat quality for miles below. The project on Miner Creek will eliminate a sediment and nutrient source that affects the health of the Billman Creek system.

By reducing this sediment and nutrient source, spawning success should increase and maintain a more healthy cutthroat trout population. Replacing a nutrient source with a riparian buffer should improve water quality as well. All in all, an investment by the Future Fisheries in the Miner Creek project will certainly enhance the cutthroat population.

TU appreciates all the work you, Carol, and the FFIP Panel do!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Patrick C. Byorth'.

Patrick Byorth